

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 12-20 and 22-31 without prejudice.

1. (canceled)

2. (previously presented) The method of claim 4, wherein said presenting said updated status message to said local user of said local computer system further comprises:

presenting said updated status message to said local user of said local computer system in response to said local user hovering a cursor over said representation of said remote computer system user.

3. (previously presented) The method of claim 4, wherein said presenting said updated status message to said local user of said local computer system further comprises:

presenting said updated status message to said local user of said local computer system in response to said local user selecting said representation of said remote computer system user.

4. (currently amended) A method of providing a local user of an instant messaging system with updated status information regarding at least one remote user, comprising:

obtaining, by an awareness client application process executing on a local computer system, from an associated awareness server application process executing on a server computer system, an online status of said remote computer system user;

presenting, by said awareness client application process, a representation of said remote computer system user, wherein said representation of said remote computer system user includes an indication of said online status of said remote computer system user;

obtaining, by said awareness client application process on said local computer system, an updated status message associated with said remote computer system user, wherein said updated status message includes personal detail information and activity information regarding said remote computer system user other than said online status of said remote computer system user;

modifying said indication of said online status of said remote computer system user to include an indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available, wherein said modifying does not present said updated status message;

presenting said updated status message to a local user of said local computer system; and

removing said indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available responsive to said presenting of said updated status message.

5. (previously presented) The method of claim 4, wherein said representation of said remote computer system user is maintained by said awareness client application process on said local computer system.

6. (previously presented) The method of claim 4, wherein said representation of said remote computer system user is an awareness object within a display window associated with an application process on said local computer system other than said awareness client application process.

7. (previously presented) The method of claim 4, wherein said online status of said remote computer system user includes an indication of whether said remote computer system user is available for an instant messaging communication session.

8. (previously presented) The method of claim 4, further comprising presenting said indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for a predetermined time after said obtaining said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user.

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 4, further comprising:

presenting an interface to said user of said local computer system, wherein said interface enables said user of said local computer system to indicate whether an indication that an updated status message associated with said user of said local computer system user is available is provided to other users.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 4, further comprising:

presenting an interface to said user of said local computer system, wherein said interface enables said user of said local computer system to specify one or more other users with which an indication that an updated status message associated with said user of said local computer system may be presented.

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